

SOCRATIC SEMINAR NORMS AND TRANSITIONS

HOTEL ON THE CORNER OF BITTER AND SWEET BY JAMIE FORD

A few things to remember:

- Be open to changing your mind.
- Build on each other's ideas.
- Use the text to prove your point.
- Make connections with other material or with your own life.
- Listen to each other.
- Remember that there might be lulls in discussion. This is okay.
- Come back to the main question.
- You may pass if called on to speak.
- There is no ONE right answer.

Goals of a Socratic Seminar:

- To engage in dialogue, not debate, about abstract concepts
- To be able to disagree politely with one another
- To reason collectively and build on each other's ideas
- To refine your abstract thinking and logical reasoning
- To analyze a group discussion

Seminar Norms

1. One person speaks at a time.

2.

Everyone contributes ideas. No one dominates or withdraws.

3. Use transitions to connect comments.

4. Invite others into the discussion artfully.

5. Agree/disagree with **ideas**, not people.

6. Ask clarifying questions.

7. Support a point with evidence from the text.

8. Use body language and eye contact to communicate active listening.

9. Stay in a posture of humility, intellectual flexibility, and curiosity.

Proficient Transitions

Rooting Ideas in the Text

1. Your comment reminds me of [quote, idea]...On page...
2. A related idea/question/comment is...
3. Where do you see that in the text?
4. I would like to (re)direct our attention to the [text]. On page...

Transitioning to a New Topic

1. So far we have discussed [summarize discussion]. I would like to transition us to a new question/ topic...

Developing Ideas Further

1. A related idea/question/comment is...
2. I am unsatisfied with our discussion of [idea] because...
3. I agree/disagree with the notion that...because...
4. Building off of [person's] idea...
5. I have a clarifying question for [person]. Are you asking...
6. I would like to return to our previous discussion of [idea] because...
7. I would like to elaborate upon [person's] idea...

Inviting Someone

1. I'm interested in hearing your thoughts on this question, [person]
2. Thank you! I'm still thinking. Can you come back to me?